

East Allington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113200
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	357288
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Stephen Dennett

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	73
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barrie Taylor
Headteacher	Michael Rolls
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2007
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Telephone number	01548 521305
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Email address	mrolls@our-school.org.uk

Age group	2–11
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2010
Inspection number	357288

**Number of children on roll in the registered
childcare provision**

**Date of last inspection of registered
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

Age group 2–11

Inspection dates 1–2 December 2010

Inspection number 357288

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The school was closed to pupils for part of the inspection due to adverse weather conditions. The inspectors visited four lessons, observed four teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Talks were held informally with parents and carers before the start of the school day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at policies, pupils' books, safeguarding records and evidence of monitoring of teaching and learning. They also scrutinised questionnaires from 36 pupils and 36 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Whether pupils' attainment in mathematics is high enough, especially for the more-able pupils.
- How well pupils are involved in assessing their own and others' work.
- How well the school uses links with other schools in Britain and the wider world to promote community cohesion.
- Whether new leaders have effectively established with members of the governing body a clear direction for the work of the school, and a focus on improving standards and provision.
- To what degree the amalgamation of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the pre-school has been successful, and what effect has this had on provision and outcomes for children.

Information about the school

East Allington Primary School is much smaller than average. Located in a small farming community in South Devon, most pupils come from the local village and the surrounding area. In September 2010, it was federated with two other small primary schools in the area. A single governing body and two co-executive headteachers manage the federation, called the 'Our School Federation'. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to the national average. The school admits children from age two into the Foundation Stage Unit, which was formed in September 2010 from the previous Ready Steady Go Pre-school and the Reception class. There are currently seven children under three that attend at various time during the week and are fully integrated with other Early Years Foundation Stage children. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage and almost none speaks English as an additional language. The school has achieved Artsmark Silver status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

East Allington is a good school. During a period of significant change, leaders have successfully maintained pupils' above average attainment and good-quality provision throughout the process of federation. Nearly all parents and carers speak very positively about the way in which the co-executive headteachers, staff and the newly formed federation governing body have handled the process. The school has also successfully amalgamated the pre-school nursery unit into the Reception class to form a Foundation Stage Unit, as part of a local authority initiative.

The school has demonstrated its good capacity for sustained improvement by raising standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6, especially for the most-able pupils. It has also successfully introduced effective assessment opportunities so that pupils can confidently assess their own and each other's work. There has been good progress in increasing pupils' understanding of their own local environment, the multicultural nature of Britain and their appreciation of the wider world.

Overall, pupils achieve well in nearly all aspects of their learning. They clearly enjoy their time in school and speak very positively about their work. Their keenness for being in school is demonstrated by the very high levels of attendance. Nearly all parents and carers say their children enjoy school. Pupils say they know who to go to when they need help. Pupils' attainment is above average in numeracy and reading. Pupils' writing is interesting and some write very well-constructed arguments when debating the issue of creation and evolution, for example. Spelling is generally good, but the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation is variable and there are too many examples of poorly presented pieces in pupils' books. Although pupils demonstrate good information and communication technology skills, the opportunities they have to use these in lessons and across the curriculum are limited.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills are well developed. They participate in a wide range of activities in school and in the local community, including singing to local residents, taking part in the village 'Wacky Races' and church services. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and take part in many sporting activities. There are growing links within the federation of schools for pupils to take part in joint projects and visits.

There is a positive 'can do' attitude throughout the school and teachers are enthusiastic about the benefits that the federation is bringing to the school. Teaching successfully engages all pupils and there is a good mix of teacher-led and child-initiated learning. This is particularly the case in the Foundation Stage Unit, where all practitioners successfully engage children, even the youngest, in a wide range of activities.

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The curriculum has been adapted to meet the range and abilities of pupils well. This results in all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, making good progress. Teachers ensure that individuals who have specific learning difficulties have work that is well matched to their needs. As teachers know their pupils very well, the level of care, guidance and support is good. The most vulnerable pupils are cared for well and this enables them to make good progress in their learning. The effective engagement of parents and carers and excellent partnerships with the federation, the local authority and other agencies mean that there are many positive benefits for the school.

Members of the governing body oversee all three schools in the federation and have a good overview of the needs of all three. They work effectively with co-executive headteachers and the heads of teaching and learning. The governing body has been a 'prime mover' in the federation process and has a vital role in helping set the strategic direction of the federated schools. The school has developed good systems for evaluating its performance and consulted widely with governors, parents, carers and pupils during the process.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Adopt a more consistent and rigorous approach to the teaching of handwriting and improving pupils' presentational skills.
- Provide pupils with increased opportunities to use their good information and communication technology skills in lessons and to support their learning across the curriculum.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter Reception with skills and knowledge that are expected for those of their age. They make good progress overall through the Early Years Foundation Stage and most achieve average attainment by the time they enter Year 1. Cohorts are small, so accurate statistical analysis is difficult. However, over the past three years, pupils' attainment in national tests has risen to above average at the end of Year 6. Current work in lessons in pupils' books and displays around the school confirm their above average attainment. The most-able pupils are making good progress because of the challenging work they are given. Those who have been identified as being gifted or talented in mathematics work with pupils from the local community college and this has accelerated their learning considerably.

The overwhelming majority of pupils said they felt safe in school. They strongly affirm there is no bullying and that pupils get on with each other amicably. Behaviour is good and individual pupils support each other well. Playtimes are enjoyable experiences because the older pupils organise games and supervise them effectively. All pupils say they know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and think the school promotes this well. Nearly all take part in the physical activities organised by the school, the federation and the local community. The pupils play a central role in the village community and participate in such events as the village show and service in the church. They also take responsibility for raising funds for local, national and international charities.

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Pupils' personal development is good and they act responsibly in and around the school. They have an appropriate range of skills that contribute to their future well-being, including a good grasp of basic numeracy and well-developed reading skills. Pupils demonstrate a subtle understanding of some of the more difficult issues of life and appreciate that other people may have different views to their own. They have a developing understanding of the wide range of religious views and cultural diversity in modern Britain.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Throughout the school, teaching is interesting, stimulating and demonstrates a good range of techniques. In the Foundation Stage Unit, children under three years of age are given a good range of activities to choose from and staff direct them appropriately as they learn. They mix well with other children in the unit, where there is a further range of stimulating areas. Pupils throughout the school are generally challenged effectively, although very occasionally tasks are not sufficiently demanding for more-able younger pupils. Good use is made of interactive whiteboards and 'visualisers' to engage pupils in learning. Teaching assistants provide valuable support in the class and in small group sessions. All staff, including teaching assistants, make good use of questioning to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Assessment is used effectively to track pupils' progress at an individual level. The recently introduced computerised tracking system is

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proving to be particularly useful in this respect. The imaginative curriculum is enriched with a wide range of extra-curricular activities to enrich learning. The good emphasis on the visual arts has led to the school receiving an Artsmark Silver award. Excellent links with the local community college enhance pupils' learning, and the developing relationships with the federation are also providing many good opportunities for a wide and varied curriculum experience.

Pupils are well cared for and good arrangements are in place to ensure that the most vulnerable pupils are looked after well. Pupils say they feel well prepared for the next phase of their education and the transfer to their next school is a smooth process. The youngest children are very well cared for and settle quickly into the daily routines in the Foundation Stage Unit.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The two co-executive headteachers and the heads of teaching and learning in the school form an effective senior management team. There is a real drive and shared sense of purpose in the work of the school and a firm commitment to making the federation successful. Although many initiatives need more time to 'bed in', what has been accomplished so far shows that senior managers have the ability and determination to see the school continue to move forward. The members of the governing body have a good combination of expertise and enthusiasm that is making a substantial contribution to the educational direction of the school within the federation. They have ensured that all safeguarding requirements are met. The school is a secure and safe place for pupils and staff. The school is fully inclusive and makes sure that all its pupils have equal access to all it has to offer. It makes sure that no pupil is discriminated against or is disadvantaged. The school has worked hard to promote community cohesion across all three strands. It has links with schools in Gambia and Kenya, and is developing links with a school in Peterborough. It has a vital role in the local community and village residents particularly appreciate this.

The school has benefited hugely from its partnership with other schools and agencies. Particularly, its links with the local community college have provided several facilities that would not otherwise have been possible from the school's resources. The parents and friends association has also provided the school with support and finance over the years and provides a vital link with the community. The federation is now making a further positive contribution through the pooling of resources and services. As a consequence of

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the prudent management of the school's budget and the maintenance of good standards and provision through the time of change, the school provides good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

With the creation of the Foundation Stage Unit, the school now provides seamless provision for children from two to five. Recently, the school has noted a downward trend in attainment when children enter the unit, especially in children's emotional development, their ability to carry out calculations, and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Despite a number of facets that are still in an early stage of development, the overall effectiveness of the unit is good because children make good progress and the overall outcomes are good. Children under three years of age are well catered for, with a rich learning environment and well-structured activities. All requirements for the registration and welfare of these children are fully met.

Teaching is good throughout the unit, with all staff working together well. Older children in the Reception area are challenged to learn at a good rate and their numeracy skills are good. They are also developing good early writing skills. Staff keep track of children's learning effectively through well-written observational notes and 'Learning Journey' books. Parents and carers are fully engaged in their children's learning through regular meetings with staff. The unit leader has successfully carried out the amalgamation and created an exciting environment in which children can learn and their welfare is paramount. The spaces are colourful, well organised and used effectively. The outdoor learning area is used well and children enjoy their outdoor play.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school and those spoken to during the inspection say that the federation process has gone smoothly; they can see the benefits for the school and the community. They say they are kept well informed about their children's progress and achievements. A few parents and carers felt that there were aspects of the school that had declined since the amalgamation had taken place, especially in respect of communications and their children's progress. The inspection team endorses parents' positive views. However, it does not endorse the negative comments, as evidence during this inspection shows that pupils are making good progress and points to good communications with parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at East Allington Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 73 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	72	8	22	2	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	61	11	31	3	8	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	61	10	28	2	6	2	6
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	75	5	14	4	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	72	8	22	2	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	64	8	22	4	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	61	11	31	2	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	24	67	7	19	0	0	2	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	64	10	28	2	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	50	14	39	1	3	2	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	61	11	31	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	72	8	22	0	0	2	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	75	7	19	2	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



3 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of East Allington Primary School, Totnes, TQ9 7RE

Thank you so much for making us welcome at your school. I was sorry that we did not get to know you better, but I am sure you enjoyed the snowy weather. I did get a chance to look at your books and talk to your teachers, as well as see you working on Wednesday. I want to especially thank the group who spoke to us about the school. You answered our questions very well and clearly like your school very much.

Yours is a good school and there are a number of things that we particularly liked.

- The youngest children really enjoy learning and have a great start to their education.
- You are all making good progress in mathematics and reading.
- You know a lot about how to be healthy and keep yourselves safe.
- Your teachers and helpers work hard to make your lessons interesting.
- The headteachers and the governing body make sure the school is well run.
- Your parents and carers are happy with the quality of education you are receiving.

These are the things we have asked the school to work on in future.

- Help you to be even better at writing by making sure your handwriting is tidy and your work is presented neatly.
- Give you more opportunities for using computers to help you learn in lessons and when you do projects and other work.

All of you can help by taking extra care when you write and present your work. You can also make the best of the opportunities you have to use computers effectively.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Dennett

Lead Inspector

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